

Professional Organizations and Process to Assess Equivalence

Professional Services Division

January 2008

Overview of this Report

At the October 2007 Committee meeting, the Committee began a discussion of how to better coordinate accreditation activities for programs seeking both state and professional or national accreditation. Section 7 of the adopted *Accreditation Framework* addresses this topic from the policy standpoint, but the procedural issues still remain to be addressed by the COA. The Committee directed staff to begin to collect information from the various national professional accrediting bodies to determine if and where commonalities might exist in their standards and accrediting processes with that of the Commission's and Committee on Accreditation. This agenda item includes some information collected to date to begin to inform the discussion.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

At the October 2007 Committee meeting, the Committee discussed the following two questions as it relates to national accreditation of a credential program:

- 1) Can a Commission approved program use a national organization's standards in lieu of the Commission's adopted program standards?
- 2) Can a program substitute the national organization's accreditation activity/status/finding in lieu of some part of the Commission's accreditation activities?

Education Code 44374 (f) provides for the option of a program or institution to substitute national or professional accreditation for the Commission's accreditation activities. But this ability to 'substitute' is restricted by the conditions delineated in the *Accreditation Framework*.

Section 7B of the *Accreditation Framework* (page 28) provides the following language related to national accreditation of a credential program.

B. National Accreditation of a Credential Program

1. The accrediting entity agrees to use the adopted California Program Standards for the specific credential under Option 1, or the standards used by the national entity are determined by the Committee to be equivalent to those adopted by the Commission under Option 1.
2. The accreditation team represents ethnic and gender diversity.
3. The accreditation team includes both postsecondary members and elementary and secondary school practitioners; a minimum of one voting member is from California.
4. The period of accreditation is consistent with a seven-year cycle and is compatible with the accreditation activities established by the state.

5. Nationally accredited credential programs participate in the unit accreditation process. The national accreditation of the program serves in lieu of the state's Program Assessment process.

Previous to the revision of the *Accreditation Framework*, there were instances where a professional organization's standards were deemed equivalent to the adopted program standards. Once equivalence was granted, a program could choose to write to the professional or national standards instead of the adopted California standards. But there has not been a simple substitution of the national or professional organizations accreditation in lieu of the Commission's.

The recommendations from the Accreditation Study Work Group and the COA regarding national accreditation of credential programs were partially addressed in recommendation #6:

Topic 6: Establish consistency in the system by including all Credential and Certificate Programs in the Accreditation Process

Preferred Option: Adopt the general principle that all programs that lead to a credential or certificate in California should be reviewed on a periodic basis and that the review process should be implemented in a manner that recognizes program differences but maintains comparable rigor across program types.

Specifically on the topic of national program accreditation, the work group and COA reached consensus that all programs must satisfy all the Commission's accreditation requirements. Following is consensus language from the Work Group's Options Matrix related to national accreditation:

All California programs must participate in the California accreditation process. California supports national program accreditation when the national program review can be coordinated with the California process***

(National organizations may do the preliminary work of determining alignment of national standards to California standards, but the COA will review all standards for comparability.)

Before national or professional accreditation can be better coordinated with the Commission's accreditation system, several important questions must be addressed. These questions were included in the October agenda item on this topic are as follows:

- 1) What procedures should the COA implement to allow programs the options allowed to them by the Education Code?
- 2) How should program standards from national or professional organizations be reviewed for equivalence to California's adopted program standards?
- 3) Who should be responsible for initiating a review of standards for equivalence?
- 4) How can national or professional accreditation be coordinated with i) Biennial Reports, ii) Program Assessment, and iii) Site visits?

To begin to answer these questions, staff has begun to collect information from major professional organizations. One of the biggest challenges is determining how many national professional associations there are and which ones are in the business of standards and accreditation. In reviewing the information to date, it is clear that professional organizations have varied roles. Some develop standards and accredit programs. In some professional areas, national accreditation by these organizations, while voluntary, is the norm. In other areas, national accreditation, while voluntary, is a path chosen only by some institutions and not by others. On the other end of the spectrum, national professional organizations define their role as advocacy and/or as a network for professionals. These organizations may or may not have standards, and only some actually play a program review or accreditation role.

The chart in Appendix A includes information on some of the organizations identified thus far. Beginning with those recognized in some fashion by NCATE as well as other relevant organization, staff is attempting to identify the organization, the corresponding California credential area, the recency of the national professional organization standards and when the next revision is anticipated, a very brief summary of their alignment with California standards (more in depth information on this topic will be necessary later in the process), and their review process and requirements, if any.

Next Steps

Over the next several months, Commission staff will continue to identify the various national professional organizations that are relevant to California's various credential areas. For those credential areas where there is no national professional organization engaged in either standards development or program review/accreditation, it will be so noted. For credential areas where there is a relevant professional organization, standards alignment analysis will be necessary as well as a more in depth review of each organization's accreditation/program review process to determine whether commonalities exist and where streamlining of dual processes of accreditation may be achieved.

Commission staff appreciates the COA's direction and comment on this effort.

Appendix A
NCATE's Specialized Professional Associations

(Please note: This information represents information collected to date, and is not comprehensive or complete at this time.)

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
1. Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)	Multiple Subject	Newly adopted standards in 2007		Information Not Available
2. Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)	Education Specialist	2001 edition of CEC standards		To be determined
3. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	Early Childhood Emphasis—very few programs and no additional authorization	Initial Preparation: 2001 edition Advanced Preparation: 2002 edition	Very Close*	4 Step accreditation process: 1) Eligibility – Application Process deems program eligible for candidacy 2) Candidacy – program needs to prepare formal self assessment 3) 2Day site visit 4) Accreditation Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accredited (5 years) • Deferred (program can rectify issues with standards in short period of time.) • Denied (program would need a significant amount of time to meet all 10 standards) 5) Continued accreditation requires annual reports, reports of program changes, and unannounced visits to randomly selected programs.
4. National Association for Gifted Children	None			N/A to California
5. National Middle School Association (NMSA)	None			N/A to California

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
6. Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)		2000 edition of AECT standards		To be determined
7. International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)		2001 edition of ISTE Standards for Technology Facilities and Leadership 2002 edition for Computer Science Education		To be determined
8. American Library Association (ALA)	Teacher Librarian	2002 edition ALA/AASL	Very Close*	Information not available
9. National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)	Pupil Personnel Services: Psychology	2000 edition of NASP standards Updated every 7-10 years (currently scheduled for 2010)	Close* Aligned with CTC except for Standards 6, 8, 9, 25	University submits self study addressing standards including candidate assessment data. Volunteer review team reviews self study Team sends report to NASP board NASP sends institution a report with status based on review team report Possible accreditation options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full accreditation (7 years) • New program accred. (3 years) • Conditional (1 year to address concerns) • Denial
10. International Reading Association (IRA)	Reading Specialist	2003 edition of the IRA standards	Close*	Program report is submitted to NCATE 6 months before site visit 3 IRA reviewers review report

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
				<p>Reviewers compile composite report with recommendation regarding accreditation and national recognition. Accreditation decisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National recognition • Recognition with condition • Not Nationally Recognized <p>If program earns national recognition, annual report is required and regular site visits are conducted (time period unclear).</p>
<p>11. Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) (composed of three associations)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELCC – District • ELCC – Building <p>(Administered by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration)</p> <p>* ELCC is composed of Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and the</p>	Administrative Services	2001 edition ELCC standards	Close*	<p>Process not available on website.</p> <p>(No California programs listed as accredited by this body in state by state listing.)</p>

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)				
12. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	None	2001 edition of TESOL		To be determined

Accrediting Bodies Recognized by NCATE (Programs not required to submit for NCATE Program Review)

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
American Library Association (ALA)	Library Media Teacher	2002 edition ALA/AASL	Very Close*	Information not available.
American Psychological Association (APA)	None			Program submit a self study, site visit team conducts review. Once accreditation is awarded, annual written reports and fees, as well as periodic (timeline for these unclear) site visits, and possible specially scheduled site visits.
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)		New Standards 2008 AHSA Standards		Initial Evaluation of Application Site Visit Conducted Accreditation Awarded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial 5 years, Reaccred 8 years • Initial 3 years, Reaccred 5 years • Probation (1 year) • Withhold Accreditation

NCATE Recognized National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
				If Accreditation awarded: Annual Reports required, with indication of program changes and how those changes impact standards alignment. Site visit at scheduled time period.
Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)	School Counseling	New Standards to be adopted in 2009 (reviewed every 7 years)	Comparable to CTC's except for Standards 8 and 9	<p>IHE Submits initial self study readiness for site visit determined by review panel On Site Visit (Sun-Wed) CACREP board reviews IHE response</p> <p>Two types of approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full accreditation (8 yrs.) • Conditional (2 years) <p>All required to submit mid-cycle reports in 4th year (major changes)</p>

Other Associations Not Included Above

National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)	School Social Work	<p>CSWE Standards, 2001</p> <p>Standards reviewed once every 7-9 years</p>	Not available	<p>University submit self study addressing standards Self study reviewed by Commissioners, assign which standards to be reviewed on site visit Site visit conducted over 1-1.5 days (this new</p>

National Professional Organization	Corresponding California Credential	Standards Adopted/Revised	Alignment	On-going Review Process
				<p>process begins in 2009) Report of site visit by volunteer reviewers. 3-6 months to respond</p> <p>Full accreditation given after response (8 years). No interim or mid cycle report due once full accreditation.</p>
No national body	Child Welfare and Attendance			No National Body